AND FROM PUTTING ON THE TEFILLIN. This also is self-evident?[3] You might say that because it is put on a level with the mezuzah[4] [therefore women should be subject to it]. Therefore we are told that this is not so.

THEY ARE SUBJECT TO THE OBLIGATION OF TEFILLAH. Because this [is supplication for Divine] mercy. You might [however] think that because it is written in connection therewith, Evening and morning and at noonday,[5] therefore it is like a positive precept for which there is a fixed time. Therefore we are told [that this is not so].

AND MEZUZAH. This is self-evident?[6] You might say that because it is put on a level with the study of the Torah,[7] [therefore women are exempt]. Therefore it tells us [that this is not so].

AND GRACE AFTER MEALS. This is self-evident? — You might think that because it is written, When the Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat and in the morning bread to the full,[8] therefore it is like a positive precept for which there is a definite time. Therefore it tells us [that this is not so].

R. Adda b. Ahabah said: Women are under obligation to sanctify the [Sabbath] day[9] by ordinance of the Torah. But why should this be? It is a positive precept for which there is a definite time, and women are exempt from all positive precepts for which there is a definite time? — Abaye said: The obligation is only Rabbinical. Said Raba to him: But it says, 'By an ordinance of the Torah'? And further, on this ground we could subject them to all positive precepts by Rabbinical authority? Rather, said Raba. The text says Remember and Observe.[10] Whoever has to 'observe' has to 'remember'; and since these women have to 'observe',[11] they also have to 'remember'.[12]

Rabina said to Raba: Is the obligation of women to say grace after meals Rabbinical or Scriptural? — What difference does it make in practice which it is? — For deciding whether they can perform the duty on behalf of others. If you say the obligation is Scriptural, then one who is bound by Scripture can come and perform the duty on behalf of another who is bound by Scripture. But if you say the obligation is only Rabbinical, then [a woman] is not strictly bound to do this, and whoever is not strictly bound to do a thing cannot perform the obligation on behalf of others. What [do we decide]? — Come and hear: 'In truth they did say: A son[13] may say grace on behalf of his father and a slave may say grace on behalf of his master and a woman may say grace on behalf of her husband. But the Sages said: A curse light on the man whose wife or children have to say grace for him.'[14] If now you say that [the obligation of these others] is Scriptural, then there is no difficulty: one who is bound by the Scripture comes and performs the duty on behalf of one who is bound by the Scripture. But if you say that the obligation is Rabbinic, can one who is bound only Rabbinically come and perform the duty on behalf of one who is bound Scripturally? — But even accepting your reasoning, is a minor subject to obligation [Scripturally]?[15] Nay. With what case are we dealing here? If, for instance, he ate a quantity for which he is only Rabbinically bound [to say grace],[16] in which case one who is Rabbinically bound[17] comes and performs the duty on behalf of one who is only Rabbinically bound.[18]

R. 'Awira discoursed — sometimes in the name of R. Ammi, and sometimes in the name of R. Assi — as follows: The ministering angels said before the Holy One, blessed be He: Sovereign of the Universe, it is written in Thy law, Who regardeth not persons[19] nor taketh reward,[20] and dost Thou not regard the person of Israel, as it is written, The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee?[21] He replied to them: And shall I not lift up My countenance for Israel, seeing that I wrote for them in the Torah, And thou shalt eat and be satisfied and bless the Lord thy God,[22] and they are particular [to say the grace] if the quantity is but an olive or an egg.[23]

MISHNAH. A BA'AL KERI[24] SAYS THE WORDS [OF THE SHEMA'][25] MENTALLY[26]